

Three chain butcher shops in Yuen Long convicted of causing noise nuisances by playing promotional recordings

Longford Foods Company Limited and Great City Limited, which operate chain butcher shops, were prosecuted as their branches in Yuen Long caused noise annoyances to the people nearby by playing persistently and loudly their promotional recordings. The two companies were convicted and fined a total of \$16,000 by Fanling Magistrates' Courts for contravening the Noise Control Ordinance (NCO). Among the cases, Longford Foods Company Limited was convicted on July 20 and today (July 27) respectively because its two butcher shops at Hop Choi Street caused noise nuisances by broadcasting promotional recordings, while Great City Limited was convicted today because its butcher shop at Mau Tan Street also caused a noise annoyance.

A spokesman for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said that the department has been strictly combating noise annoyances caused by broadcasting from shops in various districts. In addition to stepping up routine inspections and strengthening enforcements against shops with repeated contraventions, the department also collaborated with relevant departments, including the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Police, to take joint enforcement actions. Since January 2018, the EPD has stepped up combating noise nuisances caused by shops playing promotional recordings across the territories, and a total of 84 cases have been convicted by the courts for contravening the NCO, with fines of \$442,200 in total. Apart from prosecuting non-compliant companies, the EPD also prosecutes their directors in accordance with the law, with a view to stiffening penalties and strengthening the deterrent effect.

Insofar as Yuen Long District is concerned, the department has been closely monitoring the broadcasts of promotional recordings by shops in the district and conducts blitz enforcement actions from time to time to combat the illegal behaviour. Since 2018, 25 shopfront noise cases in Yuen Long District have been convicted by the courts for contravening the NCO, with fines of over \$80,000 in total.

The spokesman reminded persons responsible for retail stores and market stalls that the department will continue to conduct enforcement actions. When the shops play promotional recordings to attract customers, they must contain the volume within their store areas as far as possible and should not cause a noise nuisance to people outside their stores or nearby residents. Otherwise, it constitutes an offence. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000. As for the operators or directors of shops with repeated contraventions, they will also be criminally liable for the offence once convicted.